RUSSET HOUSE SCHOOL

Policy for Child in Care and Post Child in Care

Designated CIC & PCIC Teacher: Aysha Pettit (Deputy Head)

CIC & PCIC Governor: Ann Goldstein

Aims

Many CIC (Children in Care) & PCIC (Previously Looked after Children) will have experienced disrupted schooling and gaps in learning. In addition, a significant proportion of CIC & PCIC have some form of Special Educational Need and many have been through more than one school provision. As a result, these children (nationally and locally) are less likely to achieve their educational potential than their peers.

The Ofsted inspection handbook outlines that Inspectors will evaluate the experience of particular individuals and groups, such as pupils for whom referrals have been made to the local authority pupils with SEND, looked-after children, those with medical needs and those with mental health needs. In order to do this, inspectors will look at the experience of a small sample of these pupils and consider the way the school is working with the multi-agency group to ensure that the child receives the support they need (Ofsted School Inspection Handbook; January 2024)

At Russet House School, we will address the needs of its CIC and PCIC children by:

- providing a safe environment for all CIC & PCIC, where their educational experience is valued, high aspirations are encouraged and belief in the potential of all children is held.
- Ensuring that all CIC & PCIC are provided with, and have access to, support to enable them to have every opportunity to enjoy, learn and achieve in line with their peers.
- Ensuring that our policies and procedures for CIC & PCIC meet the requirements outlined within 'The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked-after children, Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities, DfE February 2018.'

Definitions

Children in Care (CIC) or Children in Care (CiC) refers to a child 'looked-after by a local authority' as outlined by section 22 Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

CIC/CIC are children who are in the care of the Local Authority for more than 24 hours and include children who are

- living with foster parents
- living in a residential children's home or
- living in residential settings like schools or secure units

Previously Children in Care (PCIC) refers to children who are

'...no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any persons, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales,'

Responsibilities

The Governors

The Governors have appointed Ann Goldstein as the named Governor responsible for championing the needs of CIC & PCIC at every level throughout Russet House School.

The named Governor will ensure that:

- The needs of CIC & PCIC are considered, reflected and supported within all relevant school policies.
- Governors and Senior Leadership are aware of the legal responsibilities and guidance in regards CIC & PCIC in education.
- Our admissions practises continue to give CIC & PCIC the highest priority admission to the school, as outlined within 'School Admissions' DfE guidance 2014.
- The annual CIC & PCIC monitoring report is scrutinised to ensure that the academic progress of CIC & PCIC pupils is effectively being tracked and challenged, and that there are high aspirations for these pupils.
- PPG and PP+ spending is scrutinised ensuring that is used appropriately and effectively.
- Resources are available to address the needs specific to CIC & PCIC, and that disparity in academic progress in comparison to their peers within school, including patterns in attendance, suspension and permanent exclusion and provision for gifted and talented pupils are highlighted and swiftly addressed.
- An appropriate member of staff is appointed as Designated Teacher, who has access to training and resources (including time) to undertake their responsibilities, and has the seniority to influence (Example) Schools Senior leadership, to meet and champion the needs of CIC & PCIC throughout the school.
- All staff are supported in recognising and meeting the needs of CIC/PCIC.

The Head Teacher

Is responsible for ensuring that:

- The role of the Designated Teacher (DT) is filled by an appropriate member of staff at all times (including arrangements to allow for staff absences and resignation). The DT should have the seniority to work with Senior Leadership, Governors and all staff to provide information, advice and champion the achievement and needs of CIC & PCIC pupils.
- The DT is provided with the time to fulfil their role and completes the LA Statutory Designated Teacher Training every two years as well as any other training to assist with the fulfilment of their duties.
- The DT takes a lead role in decisions regarding the spending of PPG for CIC & PCIC.
- Policies and procedures to monitor and address the needs of, and support for CIC & PCIC pupils are in pCICe and adhered to, with reference to academic progress, admissions, attendance, safeguarding and suspensions and permanent exclusion, and that swift action is taken when concerns arise.
- Russet House School reports on the progress, attendance and conduct of CIC & PCIC to Governors, the Department for Education, Ofsted and the Local Authority as required.
- Russet House School works proactively with the Local Authority to provide support and address the needs of CIC & PCIC.
- All school staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities in regards to CIC & PCIC as detailed within this policy and related guidance.
- CIC Pupil Premium is used 'to the benefit of the looked after child's educational needs as described in their Personal Education Plan (PEP)'
- Allocation of PPG funding for PCIC pupils is informed by the Education Endowment Fund guidance, is outlined within the schools online pupil premium statement, the Pupil Premium Strategy, and is spent appropriately and to benefit the needs of PCIC at (Example) School.
- All staff are aware of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups and their propensity towards being both the victims and perpetrator of Criminal and Child Sexual Exploitation and abuse.

- The Local Authority (Social Workers and the Virtual School) are informed of the suspension or permanent exclusion from school of any CIC. If the child is PCIC, a referral to Jane Manning (jane.manning@enfield.gov.uk) Enfield PCIC Officer should, with parental consent, be made, as well as to the Virtual School Head.
- An Anti-bullying Policy is in place and stringently followed which recognises that a significant proportion of CIC have experienced bullying at some point.
- The suspension and permanent exclusion of CIC & PCIC is avoided, alternatives are considered and additional support is put in place to support those pupils at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion.
- Information in regards to CIC & PCIC is treated confidentially, but also provided swiftly to relevant agencies and new schools.
- The DT priorities CIC & PCIC for access to additional support both internally and externally.
- The school adopts a trauma-informed approach and CIC / PCIC children are viewed through a trauma informed lens.
- The school's curriculum is ambitious and designed to give pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils (including pupils with SEND) the knowledge they need to take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences in later life. (Ofsted School Inspection Handbook; January 2024)

The Designated Teacher (DT) for CIC & PCIC

The Designated Teacher is responsible for and committed to championing the needs and attainment of CIC & PCIC pupils in an effort to bridge the gap and raise their attainment so that it is in-line with their peers.

The DT is a qualified teacher and "someone with sufficient authority to make things happen…[who] should be an advocate for Children in Care, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them" or the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher, as stipulated by Designated Teacher (Looked-After Pupils etc) (England) Regulations 2009.

The designated teacher is responsible for:

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- Coordinating support for CIC & PCIC in school and providing information, advice and training for staff and governors to raise awareness of their needs. For example raising awareness of possible Mental Health needs and the impact of poor attachment and trauma on behaviour and learning.
- Being the first point of contact for the Local Authority, CIC & PCIC, their carers and associated professionals, ensuring that a member of staff represents the school at all relevant meetings.
- Ensuring that all staff are trained on Trauma & Attachment.
- Liaising with the Virtual School, Social Workers, Carers and other relevant professionals when CIC & PCIC are experiencing difficulties and or at risk of exclusion, arranging meetings to share concerns and plan interventions.
- Ensuring that all CIC & PCIC (and their carers) have an identified member of staff that they can approach in school.
- Monitoring the progress of CIC & PCIC throughout the school year culminating in an annual progress report to Governors.
- Coordinating and planning smooth CIC & PCIC educational transitions, including starting school, changing Key Stage etc keeping in mind their needs, in conjunction with the carers, parents, Virtual School and other professionals.
- Swiftly identifying possible learning needs, safeguarding and mental health concerns to the Safeguarding Lead, Mental Health Lead and SENCO where appropriate and jointly planning interventions to address these concerns.
- Encouraging CIC & PCIC pupils to take part in extracurricular activities and trips, and removing any hidden barriers to their involvement.

- Ensuring instances of bullying affecting CIC & PCIC pupils are acted upon swiftly and that appropriate support is put in pCICe.
- Maintaining the confidentiality of CIC & PCIC, sharing personal information on a need-to-know basis only.
- Using the PCIC PP+ appropriately and creatively to address the needs of PCIC pupils in school.
- PEP's (Personal Education Plans)
    - Ensuing that PEP's for CIC are accurate, effective, relevant and completed within the identified timescales with the child, social worker, carers and any other relevant professionals.
    - PEP's for CIC children with ECHP's complement rather than mirror the EHCP.
    - Ensuring that targets on the PEP are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Termly).
    - Advising relevant staff of PEP targets, making sure that staff work with pupils to meet their targets.
    - Ensuring that that the Pupil Premium for CIC is used appropriately to support the child in meeting targets outlined within the PEP.

All staff

- Have high expectations in regard to the progress and achievement of CIC & PCIC pupils.
- Ensure that the individual needs of CIC & PCIC are met through quality, differentiated teaching.
- Ensure that all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils (including those with SEND) acquire the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- Are aware of the specific needs of CIC & PCIC in relation to Attachment and Trauma and make appropriate adjustment to teaching and classroom management to meet these needs.
- Are aware of the prevalence of CIC & PCIC mental health needs, and flag concerns to the DT.
- Work proactively with the DT to ensure that CIC & PCIC meet their targets and achieve, highlighting any barriers to learning, and inclusion at the earliest opportunity.
- Work to ensure the Inclusion of CIC & PCIC within the School community, maintaining their confidentiality while also providing support with raising their self-esteem, and supporting their relationships with peers.

Previously Children in Care (PCIC)

The experiences and outcomes of PCIC can be very similar to those of CIC. PCIC educational needs are unlikely to have changed just because their care status has. To address this, the needs of CIC and PCIC are prioritised and addressed in a similar way. The progress of PCIC pupils is reviewed termly and we work proactively with parents, carers and other professionals to address any areas of concern and put in pCICe support as appropriate

Parents and Carers of PCIC are encouraged to identify their child's previously looked after status on entry to the school and are required to produce documentation to support this. All parents are written to annually to request that they make us aware of their child's PCIC status. All information is treated confidentially.

CIC & PCIC pupils receive a similar level of support from the school. The attainment of PCIC pupils is monitored on a termly basis by the Designated Teacher and funding for additional support (over and above the support available for any other pupil) is funded by the annual PP+ of £2530 as outlined within the Example schools Pupil Premium Strategy.

Concerns regarding the progress of PCIC pupils are highlighted to parents, carers and the Previously Looked After Education Officer at the Virtual School (with parental consent) in a timely fashion so that support can be put in pCICe swiftly. Parents/Guardians are directed to the Adoption Fund via LA Social Work assessment where necessary.

Admissions (See Admissions Policy for detail)

Russet House School acknowledges and ensures that CIC & PCIC pupils are given priority for School Admissions as outlined in DFE School Admissions Code Guidance 2014. Priority admission is also now given to pupils who were adopted internationally.

We work collaboratively with the Virtual School regarding any concerns that we might have in relation to the admission of CIC & PCIC pupils. The Designated Teacher attends CIC & PCIC admissions meetings and works closely alongside the Virtual School, Social Worker, Carers and any other professionals to ensure that pupils feel supported, and have a successful smooth transition in to school life.

Inclusion

CIC & PCIC pupils are encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life. Through effective communication with carers, professionals and staff, as well as the appropriate use of pupil premium and the PPG, we work to remove the barriers to CIC & PCIC pupils having a robust, enjoyable and valuable school experience.

The experiences of CIC & PCIC has resulted in disproportionate levels of Special Educational Needs within these groups. Nationally 70% of CIC have some form of SEN. In acknowledgement of this, individual attainment is monitored closely by the Designated Teacher via the PEP process and any concerns raised by Carers, Social Workers and the Virtual School are welcomed and swiftly acted upon. Where it is felt that further assessment may be needed, CIC & PCIC access to additional interventions are prioritised.

A significant proportion of CIC (and therefore PCIC) have undiagnosed Speech and Language needs which impacts on educational outcomes. All pupil at Russet House have access to Speech and Language therapy as needed, linked to their diagnosis of autism.

Pupil Premium Grant & Pupil Premium Plus (See Pupil Premium Policy and Virtual School Pupil Premium Policy for Details)

Pupil Premium Grant (PPG)

A Pupil Premium Grant of £520 per term is provided by the Local Authority to assist the school with ensuring that pupils meet the targets outlined within their PEP. In line with Local Authority policy, pupil premium for each CIC is used to support:

- Academic achievement and progress.
- Wider achievement e.g. in an area in which the child is gifted and talented.
- Attendance.
- Inclusion [by reducing internal and external suspensions].
- Social skills.
- Transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider

In instances where further funding is needed for support, advice form the Virtual School will be sought.

Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

From 1 April 2023 pupil premium eligibility for pupils who have been adopted from care or have left care will include children adopted from state care or equivalent from outside England and Wales. While the PP+ for PCIC is not a 'personal budget,' should a PCIC require support over and above that which is provided for any other pupil, the PP+ will be used to fund this.

PP+ for PCIC is also 'pooled' and used to provide additional support and services to raise the attainment of the PCIC cohort within school as outlined by our online Pupil Premium Strategy Statement and as part of a 3 year Pupil Premium Strategy, for instance:

- ETIPPS (Enfield Trauma Informed Practise) Training for all staff
- Additional therapy (e.g. SALT, OT)
- One to one support
- Additional support for transitions.

- Shared resources that will benefit the PCIC

Attendance (See Attendance Policy for detail)

The attendance of CIC is carefully monitored and reported daily to Welfare Call. Carers and Parents of CIC & PCIC will be contacted regarding unauthorised absences daily. Concerns regarding attendance including identified patterns of absence will be raised with parents, carers, social workers and professionals.

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. Part-time timetables are not used to manage a pupil's behaviour. Any reduction in a CIC's timetable is discussed and agreed (in advance) with the Virtual School Headteacher.

A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full time, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion

(See Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy and Enfield's Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy for detail)

CIC and PCIC have disproportionally high levels of suspensions and permanent exclusion from schools nationally, placing them at a further educational disadvantage.

In line with Local Authority and DfE Guidance, (Example School) do not permanently exclude CIC & PCIC. In addition, we work closely with the Local Authority to avoid the fixed term suspension of both groups.

Advice and support from the Local Authority (Social Workers, the Virtual School and the Previously Children in Care Officer) is sought where it is felt that a CIC or PCIC may become at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion. Support and alternatives to suspension and permanent exclusion are considered.

Alternatives to exclusion may include:

- Additional Adult Support
- Managed Moves (through the Headteacher of the Virtual School for CIC and Fair Access for PCIC)
- CAMHS support
- Additional therapeutic intervention via the Adoption Fund (PCIC only)

Where a suspension of a CIC is unavoidable, the Virtual School is contacted prior to the decision being made and carers and the Virtual School are contacted prior to the pupil leaving the school site. Alternative provision is provided on day one of the suspension. Plans and support are put in pCICe to avoid further suspensions on the child's return to school.

Based on Enfield Virtual School Policy 2023
Agreed by Russet House Governors 26th September 2024
Reviewed June 25 agreed by Governors 13th November 2025

Chair of Governors: Sian Mainwaring
Signature: